

Is survival preparation a lack of faith?

Without keeping things in a proper Scriptural perspective there can be some confusion as to whether or not a Christian should prepare food and shelter ahead of time for a possible emergency situation. Below is the verse that usually comes up in a conversation where we may discuss the matter:

Jesus says, "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on" etc. – and the rest of this chapter. (Matthew 6:25-34)

However this is a discourse about life in general with a sound bit of advice from our Master – “Do not worry”. Jesus promises that if you seek first the Kingdom of God that over the course of your daily life you will be taken care of in your material needs “from on high” just as the birds are daily fed by the Father. But this is not talking about a pending disaster or a judgment coming upon the land by God Almighty. For this particular awareness made known through divine revelation or by realizing a coming prophecy, God deals with it by another gifted bit of wisdom – needful cautious planning.

Two great examples of needful cautious planning are Noah and Joseph. Noah, after being told by God of the pending flood that would sweep the land, physically planned and prepared for 120 years in building the ark and storing provisions. Joseph, in Egypt, had the nation store up food for seven years ahead in making ready for seven years of famine which God had forewarned Joseph of. Both Noah and Joseph were men of faith. They did not worry about daily needs to be met, but they were blessed in preparing for a mega disaster arriving by the will of God. In realizing that a clear and present danger was in the making by Esau, Jacob embarked in some heavy duty “logistics planning” to deal with the situation. This planning was just after Jacob had conversed with messengers at Mahanaim (Gen. 32:1-23). They never told Jacob to merely proceed aimlessly in a state of wishful thinking. There are times when action is needed. And sometimes that action requires a purposeful hiding from evil. “*A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.*” (Proverbs 22:3)

Not preparing for danger is akin to neglect of which the Scriptures do not speak favorably. Not only is it righteous to plan ahead for perils after putting trust in God's guidance, but it is noble to plan ahead for the security of others if it is in your power to do so. The apostle Paul told the ecclesia at Philippi that he was always ready to live by meager means or by prosperity, but that he had welcomed the fact that they (the brethren) had gathered provisions which they sent to Paul to help him in his needs and difficulties. These goods given to Paul were favorable “material sacrifices” that pleased God. “*But I (Paul) have all and abound: I am full having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.*” (Philippians 4:18)

Most assuredly, trust in God comes first before any planning is considered. God can save (safety) through miraculous circumstance or by forewarning His faithful flock to prepare. Any preparation of material goods should be preceded by prayer for wisdom concerning the matter. Each person's situation may be entirely different from the other, and a specific amount or type of food, equipment, shelter can vary quite a bit depending on locale, climate, available foraging, or other consideration. For some, a closet of canned goods may suffice. For others a barn of cattle feed may be needed. Pray and follow the lead of The Holy Spirit in your convictions, and seek the help of other experienced brothers in this area. Be confident that all will work for you as needed. Bottom line – preparing is not a lack of faith. Worrying about daily needs to be met is. Foretold prophetic dangers are not “daily needs of life”